

**\*MINUTES**

**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

**February 5-6, 2004**

Lansing Center  
333 E. Michigan  
Lansing  
-and-  
Stevens T. Mason Building  
530 W. Allegan  
Lansing

**PRESENT FOR THE COMMISSION**

Mary Brown  
Keith Charters, Chairman  
Bob Garner  
Jerry Hall  
John Madigan  
William Parfet  
Frank Wheatlake

**PRESENT FOR STAFF**

K. L. Cool, Director  
Michael Leffler, Legal Counsel  
George Burgoyne, Resource Management Deputy  
Jim Ekdahl, Upper Peninsula Field Deputy  
Department Staff

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**Chairman Charters** called the Committee of the Whole meeting of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to order at 3:08 p.m. on Thursday, February 5, 2004. The Committee of the Whole is a working session of the NRC.

**Chairman Charters – Traverse City’s “Citizen of the Year”**

**Commissioner Hall** commended Chairman Charters on receiving the “Citizen of the Year Award” from the Traverse City Chamber of Commerce. The Commission applauded him on his award. Chairman Charters noted that this was a great honor and it was a surprise. His family and many friends were present for the honor.

**Gaylord to Cheboygan Trail**

**Mindy Koch, Chief, Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division**, reported that the Gaylord to Cheboygan Trail Workgroup worked very hard and considered diverse opinions in developing recommendations for the trail. She introduced **Jim Radabaugh, the recreation and trail manager for Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division**.

**Karen Pung, Gray Fischer, and Dan Wells**, were present from the Workgroup to present the recommendations as developed by the 17 member Workgroup. The entire trail stretches 48

## MINUTES

Page 2

February 5-6, 2004

miles from Gaylord to Cheboygan. The trail crosses many resource aspects and is considered a true asset to the State. The primary issue that the Workgroup addressed was the lack of authorization for snowmobile use near the Mullett Lake stretch. It was the charge of this Workgroup to develop a report on the status of the trail, address pending issues, and develop recommendations for implementation of recommended improvements. It was agreed that trail uses should not impact the surface of the trail.

The Workgroup developed a list of imperatives for the trail: brush, grade and mow the entire trail immediately; sign and manage the amenities; surface the entire trail with crushed stone; and pave the Mullett Lake stretch. The Workgroup recommended that a "friends" group could create a development plan for the entire trail and perform the year-around maintenance needed. Any snowmobile route alternatives should be permanent, safe and economically beneficial.

There are two pending issues needing resolution to make the trail a reality. Both can be resolved at the State level. The first is the crossing of the Little Sturgeon River between Onaway Road and M-68. There are extensive wetlands just east of I-75, but the Little Sturgeon River was diverted through a culvert to go under the highway. If the trail, for a short distance (less than 200 yards), could utilize the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) right-of-way to cross the River at this culvert, it would avoid the wetlands completely. A change in legislation, MDOT approval and an opaque fence to prevent snowmobile headlights from interfering with on-ramp automobile traffic would be required. Secondly, the trail is proposed to go through approximately 2.5 miles of land in the very northwest corner of the Pigeon River Country State Forest (PRCSF). This conflicts with a DNR policy/guideline that does not allow designated snowmobile trails in the PRCSF. It should be noted snowmobiles are allowed in the PRCSF, and snowmobiles currently use most of the proposed trail route as it goes along seasonal roads and horse trails. However, a designated snowmobile trail is not provided for in the current PRCSF plan.

The Gaylord to Cheboygan Workgroup has worked diligently to help the DNR find a solution to the controversial issues along Mullett Lake. The report outlines the proposed strategy to implement various goals in order to develop both the Gaylord to Cheboygan Rail-trail, and the Tuscarora Snowmobile trail, into world-class recreational facilities. With that, the Workgroup asks that the DNR fully endorse and support this proposal, and using its influence to quickly resolve the two pending issues at the State level in order to make the snowmobile trail a reality.

**Ron DeCook, Governmental Affairs Director, Michigan Department of Transportation,** stated he had discussed the I-75 right-of-way issue with Dennis Knapp and Jim Radabaugh. The MDOT has concerns with snowmobile trails running along an on-ramp; however, he looks forward to the opportunity to work with staff to develop a resolution to this issue and/or find alternatives.

**Commissioners Parfet and Wheatlake** support the concept of the proposal laid out by the Workgroup. **Mr. DeCook** reiterated that he has safety concerns and will work with the DNR on the issue.

**Mindy Koch** again stressed how hard the Workgroup worked to develop the report. There are barriers yet to be addressed, but the basic roadmap has been developed. **Director Cool** recommended that staff check with other states regarding their dealings with easements along state highways.

### **CHANGES IN DIRECTOR'S OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION**

**Director Cool** reported the DNR is in the process of leadership transition. He acknowledged that communication between the DNR Director's Office and the NRC and the Executive Office needs improvement. To assure a better forum for communication and integrated decision-making, he has promoted Dennis Knapp to the position of Special Assistant to the Director. The position

## MINUTES

Page 3

February 5-6, 2004

encompasses many of the duties of the Chief of Staff as well as ongoing duties as Legislative Liaison. He said that Mr. Knapp has an outstanding reputation for leadership. He is highly respected within the DNR and the conservation community. He trusts and is confident that Mr. Knapp will be a bridge for better communication between the NRC and the Director's Office and a better bridge for the Lieutenant Governor's Office as well. He will represent the DNR at the Governor's Cabinet meetings with the Director so that transition information will be assured for the next Director, and he will act on behalf of the Director with full authority of the Executive Office. **Director Cool** asked the NRC, the Governor's Office and Lieutenant Governor's office to recognize this new position.

**Chairman Charters** recommended that the NRC ponder this decision and discuss further on Friday, February 6.

### **WILDLIFE ISSUES**

**Commissioner Garner** reported that the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife Issues has recommended that staff develop an Interim Order of the Commission requesting an exemption from the feeding ban in certain counties of the Upper Peninsula (UP).

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The Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

### **REGULAR MEETING OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

**Chairman Charters** called the regular meeting of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to order at 4:30 p.m.

### **PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

Tom Alward  
Rob Anderson, Michigan Farm Bureau  
Merino Bernardi, Kalkaska County property owner  
Henry Boyer, Farwell  
Representative Rich Brown  
Jim Campbell, New Boston  
Marilyn Carr, Brighton Township  
Dean Coats, DMU 118 Landowner  
Guy Dobies, Brighton Township  
David Geistler, Mid-Michigan Long Spurs  
Kevin Gould, deer hunter in DMU 118  
Lynn Gould, Clare County  
Lamar Gunden, Clare  
Dave Hogan, Michigan Hawking Club  
Lillian Hopkins, Brighton Township  
Matt Kurta, Senator Michael Prusi's Office  
Jay Miller, Pine Lake Subdivision  
Ellen Nitz, Brighton Township  
Arch Reeves, Pigeon River Country Advisory Council  
Denise Rice, Brighton  
Paul Rose, Hillman  
Perry Russo, Quality Deer Management Association  
Fred Schwedt  
Alan Seites, Milford  
Ron Shaver, Lansing

## MINUTES

Page 4

February 5-6, 2004

Ed Spinazzola, Quality Deer Management Association  
Robert Sweet  
Alan Thompson, Indian River Tourist Bureau  
Chris Tracy, property owner in DMU 118  
Al Trippel, Environmental Resource Management  
Bob Ulrich, Inland Lakes Snowmobile Club  
Ron Umphrey, Clare  
Sam Washington, MUCC  
Don Eaton, Gaylord to Cheboygan Trail Advisory Workgroup  
Jenness Weigand, Brighton Township  
Rick Weigand, Brighton Township  
Marc Yenkel  
Ann Zinn, South Lyon

**Representative Rich Brown, 110<sup>th</sup> District**, expressed appreciation for reconsideration of the feeding ban in the UP. The practice of feeding deer in the UP in severe weather conditions is a long-standing tradition to maintain a deer population.

**Matt Kurta, Senator Michael Prusi's Office**, concurred with comments made by Representative Brown.

**Commissioner Hall** asked for assurance from Representative Brown and Senator Prusi's offices that they will work with their constituents to help make the supplemental feeding regulations work.

**David Geistler, Mid-Michigan Long Spurs**, asked to expand hunting regulations to provide non-ambulatory hunters to be recipients of donated bear permits. Presently, the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge has expanded the term non-ambulatory to mean those needing to use a wheel chair for their daily activities. **Commissioner Garner** said that this issue will be reviewed in the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife Issues meetings. He supports putting non-ambulatory hunters in the woods.

**Merino Bernardi, Kalkaska County property owner**, opposed increases to the trail user permit, and believes that the State trails are not being properly managed. He does not believe that snowmobile trails users are being kept properly informed of where their fees are being spent. He requested that the DNR produce a written and graphic comprehensive statewide master plan and time table for trail system improvements, changes and planned closing of historical riding areas that is based on public input and from legal, duly publicized DNR public meetings.

**Marc Yenkel** supports mandatory quality deer management (QDM) in DMU 118. He believes that the five-year demonstration period in this area proved successful. He disagrees with the 66 percent support rule for mandatory QDM, stating that it should be a simple majority and believes the scientific data supports that QDM is sound scientific management.

**Paul Rose, Hillman**, requested that allowable restricted baiting be expanded to the seven-county area in the northeast Lower Peninsula (LP). He believes that the disease transmission risks associated with the expansion of limited, restricted baiting in this area is significantly less than the exposed hay bales or other unrestricted cattle and livestock feeding activities that take place during the winter months. **Commissioner Garner** noted that the baiting ban in the northeast LP were intended to be in effect for five years and were intended to eradicate bovine tuberculosis.

**Jay Miller, representing Pine Lake Subdivision and other concerned citizens in southeast Michigan**, reviewed concerns with the Brighton Recreation Area Boundary proposal. A 50 acre parcel off Cunningham Lake Road has been proposed for a possible land exchange. The DNR indicated to Mr. Miller that the parcel has limited resource value, limited recreation and hunting

## MINUTES

Page 5

February 5-6, 2004

value, is difficult to manage and there is development pressure. Mr. Miller countered these items saying that this property is a breeding area for the eastern massasauga rattlesnake, and other wildlife; provides for bird watching, hiking, deer bow hunting, sledding and trail running, etc.; and has limited access from the road which reduces the chances for it becoming a dumping ground. He argued that not selling this property would prevent it from being developed.

**Ed Spinazzola, Quality Deer Management Association**, believes that data indicates there is an improvement in deer habitat in DMU 118 resulting from the mandatory QDM. He also believes that there is now a buck-to-doe ratio in DMU 118 of one buck per two does. He recommended that mandatory QDM continue in DMU 118.

### **RECOGNITION OF FORMER COMMISSIONERS EISELE AND CAMPBELL**

The Commission and DNR recognized **Dr. Paul Eisele** for over 13 years of service as a Natural Resources Commissioner, and **Jim Campbell** for over two years as a Commissioner.

### **PUBLIC APPEARANCES (continued)**

**Jim Campbell, New Boston**, recommended that the DNR and NRC review the possibility of implementing a limited bobcat trapping season in the LP. He also cautioned the NRC on making decisions about supplemental feeding due to disease concerns and advised them to take caution in its decision-making.

**Jenness Weigand, Brighton Township**, said there has been no relief from the noise coming from the Island Lake Shooting Range. She believes that the only way to abate noise from a sporting clay operation is to fully enclose the facility. The residents do not want to endure the noise levels any longer.

**Rick Weigand, Brighton Township**, recommended that the DNR comply with the original intentions of this range and asked for some idea of the future plans of the DNR.

**Marilyn Carr** reviewed the design plans for the range as originally proposed. She commented that she is concerned that lead shot being utilized at the range will cause negative environmental impacts. She does not believe that the original intent of the range has been upheld.

**Commissioner Hall** clarified that skeet machines are located at the top of the berms but shooting was done below that elevation.

**Guy Dobies read a letter from Jim Fackert**. Mr. Fackert was a member of the committee that worked on the Island Lake Recreation Area range site and specifications in 1988 and 1989. The site location was changed, the range was built and there were very few complaints from the neighbors until 2002 with the sporting clays were added. He has requested that the sporting clays be closed.

**Lillian Hopkins, Brighton Township**, read a letter from Congressman Rogers to Director Cool discussing the noise from the range. In this letter, he asked to be advised if noise levels are exceeding 65 decibels and be informed of what the DNR intends to do to address the noise levels.

**Chris Tracy, property owner in DMU 118**, favors keeping the mandatory three-on-a-side rule in DMU 118. He recommended acting on scientific data versus survey results when making the decision whether or not to extend the mandatory status. He does not believe the survey of hunters in the area is what the basis should be for a sound decision. He suggested providing a data summary of the results to those surveyed would be beneficial when the NRC is making

## MINUTES

Page 6

February 5-6, 2004

decisions. **Commissioner Garner** asked if he would continue practicing deer management as it has been if it were not mandatory. **Mr. Tracy** responded yes, and possibly more restrictive. **Commissioner Hall** said that the supporters in DMU 118 had five years to prove to the nay-sayers that the process worked, and they did not succeed. He said that speaks loud to what is happening in the area.

**Arch Reeves, Pigeon River Country Advisory Council**, discussed the proposal to develop a designated snowmobile trail across the northwest portion of the Pigeon River Country State Forest. He asked that no decisions be made on this portion of the trail prior to development of a decision by the Pigeon River Country Advisory Council.

**Tom Alward** believes that the deer herd in the area has suffered resulting from mandatory QDM in DMU 118 and opposes an extension.

**Sam Washington, MUCC**, recommended that the Pigeon River Advisory Council be consulted prior to any decision on snowmobile trails in the Pigeon River Forest and to look carefully at a plan for the area. He applauded the NRC for good judgement and open-mindedness relative to supplemental feeding in the UP.

**Commissioner Madigan** thanked MUCC and the sportsmen of the State for their help on this issue.

**Don Eaton, Gaylord to Cheboygan Trail Advisory Workgroup**, thanked the DNR and NRC for forming the Workgroup and recognized Mindy Koch and Bill O'Neill for their efforts in this process.

**Jim Haslock, Gaylord to Cheboygan Trail Advisory Workgroup**, thanked the DNR and NRC for forming the Workgroup to determine what is the best option for the area. He said that the Workgroup has put a lot of effort and time into resolving the issues in the area.

**Fred Schwedt** questioned why the Cheboygan to Gaylord Trail didn't provide snowmobile trails the full length. **Mindy Koch** stated that the portions of the trail open to snowmobiling have been improved. In the 14-mile stretch where snowmobiles are not allowed, there have been no monies for improvement. The proposal would be to improve that stretch using other than snowmobile fee monies.

**Robert Sweet** distributed snowmobile trail options he has proposed over time and asked why they are not acceptable. He requested that the town of Topinabee be connected for access to the trail.

**Kevin Gould, a deer hunter in DMU 118**, does not believe the mandatory QDM (three point on a side rule) has improved the quality of bucks in DMU 118. He asked that the management of bucks be returned to the landowners and hunters and that this option not be mandatory.

**Dean Coats, DMU 118 landowner**, owns 80 acres in DMU 118. He has recognized a decline in bucks in the area and opposes mandatory QDM in DMU 118.

**Lynn Gould, Clare County**, opposes mandatory antler restrictions (QDM) in DMU 118. He believes there have been fewer bucks in the area each year for the past five years.

**Ron Umphrey, Clare**, opposes mandatory antler restrictions (QDM) in DMU 118. He believes the deer population in the area is reduced, negatively impacting the hunting.

## MINUTES

Page 7

February 5-6, 2004

**Henry Boyer, Farwell**, opposes mandatory antler restrictions (QDM) in DMU 118. He does not believe QDM has bettered the deer herd.

**Rob Anderson, Michigan Farm Bureau**, distributed to the NRC and staff, the 2004 Michigan Farm Bureau policy book.

**Alan Seites, Milford**, reiterated that there is a noise problem from the Island Lake Shooting Range. He requested that noise reduction be the top priority in any changes to the Range.

**Ellen Nitz, Brighton Township**, said that Kensington Metropark is one of Michigan's treasured parks. She expressed concern that the noise from the Island Lake Shooting Range will drive away visitors to the park.

**Ron Shaver, Lansing**, commended the new Commissioners on their appointments and commended the Commission on their services to the State of Michigan. He opposes QDM in DMU 118 and asked for support in ending the mandatory QDM in DMU 118. He also supports banning baiting in the State until it is known what impacts chronic wasting disease may or may not have in the State.

**Lamar Gunden, Clare**, opposes mandatory QDM in DMU 118. He reviewed a resolution from the Clare County Farm Bureau opposing an extension of QDM in DMU 118.

**Dave Hogan, Michigan Hawking Club**, supported the proposed Falconry Regulations as proposed by staff and noted that other organizations such as MUCC, the Michigan Audubon Society, etc., also support the proposed regulations. He thanked the NRC and DNR staff for the opportunity to participate in the developmental process.

**Al Trippel, Environmental Resource Management**, provided information related to the purpose of the 21 mineral leases on the Director's action items. The purpose of these leases is to enable the company to conduct further exploration to determine the extent of metal occurrence in the area as well as create a land buffer around the existing site.

**Denise Rice, Brighton**, expressed concern with the impact on the Huron River, a designated Natural River, from the Island Lake Shooting Range. She requested that the noise levels at the range be handled.

**Perry Russo, Northcentral Regional Director, Quality Deer Management Association**, recommended that hunters be educated on the QDM process to inform them that there is more to deer management than just antlers.

**Ann Zinn, South Lyon**, worked on the original planning committee for the Island Lake Shooting Range. The original plans were to keep noise within acceptable levels. She recommended that the Range be closed until the range can be operated within the original limits.

**Alan Thompson, President, Indian River Tourist Bureau**, thanked the Cheboygan to Gaylord Trail Workgroup for its efforts in developing a plan for the trail. He said that snowmobiling is the main business in that area in the winter and is important for the economics of the community. He asked that the NRC and DNR support the recommendations of the Committee.

**Bob Ulrich, representing the Inland Lakes Snowmobile Club and the Cheboygan Area Snowmobile Club**, supports establishing an additional snowmobile trail to connect Cheboygan and Indian River for the 2004/2005 snowmobile season providing that all safety issues are resolved, the proposal is funded and appropriate permissions are obtained to utilize the property included in the proposal and/or opening of the railroad bed between Indian River and Cheboygan.

## MINUTES

Page 8

February 5-6, 2004

If a new trail is not established for the 04/05 season, they proposed that the railroad bed be utilized to provide the connection. He thanked the DNR staff, the NRC and the Workgroup for their efforts on this issue.

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The Natural Resources Commission meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m. on Thursday, February 5, 2004 and reconvened at 8:35 a.m. on Friday, February 6, 2004. Commissioners Garner and Hall were delayed and arrived after the meeting convened.

### **DIRECTOR'S/STAFF REPORTS**

**George Burgoyne, Resource Management Deputy**, reported that the sale of lands proposed for Director's Action are occurring to build the Land Facilitation Fund in order to purchase other properties that better meet the DNR's needs. Discussion ensued. **Commissioner Parfet** noted that this process can be viewed as a "value-added" approach to land management. Discussion ensued.

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**Commissioner Hall** arrived at 8:40 a.m.

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### **MINERALS LEASES**

**Mindy Koch** said that the Minerals Leases on the agenda for Director's Action, said that minerals leases are issued to allow an opportunity for exploration. However, an exploration plan must be submitted and approved by the DNR prior to any exploration occurring. A lease alone without additional reviews and permission does not provide the right to explore or mine.

**Chairman Charters** said that he is comfortable with proceeding with the minerals leases and the presentations made at the NRC Policy Committee on Land Management meeting held on February 5 proved very informative. **Commissioner Brown** said that these leases as approved, are clearly for exploration purposes and requested that the NRC and the public be informed of when the next step occurs.

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**Commissioner Garner** arrived at 8:50 a.m.

### **DIRECTOR'S ACTION ITEMS**

**Director Cool** stated his intent to approval all Director's Action Items on the agenda.

### **GAYLORD TO CHEBOYGAN TRAIL**

**Commissioner Parfet** noted that he and Commissioner Wheatlake visited the 14-mile stretch of the Trail near Mullett Lake that is currently closed to snowmobile use. Two concerns exist: 1) use of the old Onaway Road Bridge and whether snowmobiles and autos can share the roadway; and 2) use of the Pigeon River Country for a snowmobile trail. **Mindy Koch** reported that the bridge issue is not unique to allow usage of a bridge for snowmobiles considering an alternative is being developed. In the past the DNR has worked with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and expanded the roadway to allow room for snowmobiles during the season. That would be a priority. AT the portion of I-75 where the roadside will need to be utilized, staff has been working with MDOT and has had excellent response. A buffer needs to be developed where the snowmobiles approach the restricted right-of-way of headlight concerns.



## MINUTES

Page 9

February 5-6, 2004

She said that the Snowmobile Association has been discussing an amendment to the snowmobile act with Legislators that will actually allow snowmobiles to utilize restricted areas that is currently prohibited. She supports moving forward on utilizing the right-of-ways. Relative to the Pigeon River usage issue, the management plan created in 1973, states that no new trails will be provided for ORVs (which in definition includes snowmobiles). This issue will be discussed with the Pigeon River Advisory Council and has been and will continue to be discussed with the County Road Commissions to work out possible resolutions to snowmobile routes in the area. More discussions will be held. She commended the Workgroup for accurately reflecting issues at hand.

**Commissioner Parfet made a motion, supported by Commissioner Wheatlake, that the NRC strongly endorse the concept of the recommendations as presented by the Cheboygan to Gaylord Trail Workgroup. Motion unanimously carried.**

### **SELECTION OF DENNIS KNAPP AS SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR**

**Director Cool** further explained his decision to appoint Dennis Knapp to the position of the Special Assistant to the Director. The Chief of Staff, was authorized to act on behalf of the Director. As a result of his loss, Director Cool felt it necessary to appoint someone to deal with issues on an integrated basis. He thought that Mr. Knapp was the best qualified person to achieve that. There are two positions, the Law Enforcement Division Chief, and the Parks and Recreation Division Chief, that have not been permanently filled. He intends to leave those positions open for the next Director to appoint. He stated his goal is to ensure that the DNR prospers after he leaves the position.

**Chairman Charters and the NRC** congratulated Dennis Knapp on his appointment and offered their assistance.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 8-9, 2004 NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING**

**Commissioner Garner made a motion, supported by Commissioner Madigan, for approval. Motion unanimously carried.**

### **INTERIM ORDER ON SUPPLEMENTAL DEER FEEDING IN THE UPPER PENINSULA**

**Commissioner Madigan** reported that the NRC had requested staff develop an Interim Order allowing supplemental feeding of deer in Ontonagon, Houghton, Keweenaw, Baraga, Alger, Luce and those portions of Marquette and Chippewa counties north of the T43N-T44N boundary line. Supplemental feeding will be allowed by permit from the Monday following January 1 and shall not extend beyond May 15. Permits will be issued by the DNR so long as the applicant has permission from the landowner or the land administrator; the feed is placed away from livestock, specific agricultural crops, and at least ¼ mile from paved public roads. Feed is limited to grains or pelletized food that is scattered or dispersed on the ground. Permittees are required to report to the Department on their feeding activities by May 30, 2004.

**Commissioner Madigan made a motion, supported by Commissioner Garner, to approve the Interim Order on Supplemental Deer Feeding in the Upper Peninsula as proposed by staff.**

**Commissioner Parfet** said he is 100 percent against this Interim Order reflecting that the NRC debated their decision to ban supplemental feeding and agreed and pledged to use sound

## MINUTES

Page 10

February 5-6, 2004

science in decision-making. He said that the NRC had previously concluded that feeding meets and exceeds the carrying capacity of the land and that the NRC had agreed that with the onset of the first severe winter conditions, they would stick to their decision. He believes this order backs down from that commitment. **Commissioner Brown** asked if felled trees were legal for feed. The answer was yes. **Commissioner Hall** said he totally believes in sound scientific management, but said that there is a recreational industry surrounding hunting in the UP, that deer were not naturally placed in some areas, but since the populations are there, he supports supplemental feeding. **Commissioner Garner** noted that further discussion on an extended moratorium will be discussed at a future NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife Issues meeting. **Commissioner Wheatlake** noted that he agrees with the Interim Order because he has spent time in that area during severe winter conditions. **Chairman Charters** said that the Attorney General's office confirmed that the NRC does have the authority to implement this order. **Commissioner Garner** stated that permits do not necessarily have to be issued if they don't meet certain criteria.

**Roll Call Vote: Voting yes: Commissioners Garner, Hall, Madigan, Wheatlake, Brown and Charters. Voting No: Commissioner Parfet. Motion carried 6-1.**

### **NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON WILDLIFE ISSUES – REPORT**

**Committee Chair Garner** reported that the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife Issues met on February 5, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. in Lansing. **Commissioners Garner and Hall** attended on behalf of the Committee. **Commissioner Madigan** also attended. Items of discussion included: Proposed Trapping Ban-Traverse City; Proposed Wildlife Regulations; Informational Presentation on Wildlife Surveys; and Urban Wildlife Issues.

### **NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON LAND MANAGEMENT – REPORT**

**Committee Chairman Charters** reported that the NRC Policy Committee on Land Management met on February 5, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. in Lansing. **Commissioners Charters and Brown** attended for the Committee. **Commissioner Wheatlake** also attended. Items of discussion included: Land Review Strategy Implementation Update; and a briefing on the Metallic Mineral Leasing and Mining issue.

### **NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, INFORMATION, MARKETING AND EDUCATION (T.I.M.E.)**

**Committee Chair Brown** reported that the NRC Policy Committee on T.I.M.E. met on February 5, 2004 at 11:00 a.m. in Lansing. **Commissioners Brown and Garner** attended for the Committee. **Commissioner Charters** also attended. Items of discussion included: General Update on Issues including the fishing guide, parks reservation system and timelines for issue discussions at future meetings; Watchable Wildlife Guide; and Goals.

### **UPPER PENINSULA HABITAT WORKGROUP**

**Commissioner Madigan** reported that the Upper Peninsula Habitat Workgroup met on January 26, 2004 at Bay College, Escanaba. Several items were discussed and the minutes are available upon request.

### **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

**Commissioner Garner** reported receiving many phone calls and letters and said it was a busy month.

**Commissioner Hall** reported receiving many phone calls and letter. He visited the Island Lake Shooting Range on two occasions and observed what is occurring relative to noise issues. He reiterated that there is no shooting taking place from the tops of the berms.

#### **ISLAND LAKE SHOOTING RANGE – SOUND TESTING**

**Dennis Knapp, Special Assistant to the Director**, reported that he spent two days at the Island Lake Shooting Range, along with Scott Hansen, a professional sound engineer, including one-half of Saturday, during tournament shooting, with Green Oak Township Supervisor and Brighton Township Supervisor, going to the neighborhoods near the Range to take sound tests. He noted that there are several challenges ahead to reduce sound from the Range. He said that he is most focused on what can be done to reduce sound from the Range. Once the results of the sound testing is received, an action plan will be developed and brought back for consideration by the NRC at either the March or April NRC meetings. It is not the DNR's intent to close the range, but it is definitely the intent to make it quieter and improve the quality of life for the residents near the range. Mr. Knapp stated that the township supervisors were present during the testing and agree with the process the DNR is taking. He commented that, regarding comments previously received that sporting clays not being part of the original plan, documentation exists that they were approved.

#### **COMMISSIONER REPORTS (continued)**

**Commissioner Hall** reported that he has worked on DNR matters for approximately 2.5 hours per day answering phone calls and letters.

**Commissioner Madigan** received several phone calls and letters, and attended several meetings related to DNR matters.

**Commissioner Wheatlake** received several phone calls and letters. He attended the Governor's State-of-the-State Address on January 27 and was able to talk to key legislators regarding land management issues.

**Commissioner Brown** received several phone calls and letters and had contact with the media.

**Commissioner Parfet** received several phone calls and letters. He reported that the NRC Policy Committee on Finance and Administration will be meeting on February 23, 2004 in Lansing.

**Commissioner Parfet** stressed the importance of achieving the NRC goal to address restricted funds and that the NRC needs to work with the Legislature to educate them of the surrounding issues.

**Chairman Charters** received several phone calls and letters. He, Commissioner Wheatlake and Deputy Director Kelli Sobel met with Governor Granholm to discuss the Payments-In-Lieu-of-Taxes and were well received. He also reported that the Director's Selection Committee had met and are moving forward with the Director search.

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The meeting adjourned at 10:07 a.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Keith J. Charters, Chair                      K. L. Cool, Director

MINUTES

Page 12

February 5-6, 2004